

Fenita bergembira karena doanya telah dikabulkan.

Setelah turun dari panggung Fenita segera menemui Winda. Fenita melihat Om Rian dan seorang gadis berada di samping Winda. Gadis itu adalah kakak Fenita yang dia nantikan kedatangannya. Fenita memeluk kakaknya erat-erat.

Winda memberi tahu kalau doa Fenita juga dikabulkan oleh Allah: Malik masuk pondok pesantren. "Allah Maha Penyayang pada semua makhluk-Nya. Bagian-bagian alam yang ada di dunia ini pastilah dapat membahagiakan manusia dengan membuahkan manfaat. Namun, kita saja yang sering melihat kemurahan Allah itu secara sempit," jelas Winda.

AKU AKAN PULANG KE WAMENA



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AKU AKAN PULANG KE WAMENA

Going Home to Wamena



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GOING HOME TO WAMENA

Kuletakan surat penempatanku menjadi guru di Wamena di atas meja coklat tua di kamarku dan meneguk air minum untuk mencoba menenangkan pikiran. Kupandangi sebuah bingkai foto di atas meja. Fotonya sudah memudar. Aku tak ingat kapan terakhir aku memandangi foto itu.

"Ibu, Ayah, aku rindu! Masih bisakah kita bertemu?" bisikku dengan suara yang bergetar sambil mengambil foto tersebut.

Untuk beberapa waktu ingatan masa kecilku pun kembali. Aku lahir pada tahun 1996 di sebuah kota kecil di Kabupaten Jayawijaya. Kota tersebut bernama Wamena, yang berarti anak babi. Di Wamena aku menjalani masa-masa kecilku bersama kedua orang tuaku. Meski kami bukanlah penduduk asli di kota Wamena, kedua orang tuaku selalu mengajarkan aku untuk mencintai tanah kelahiranku tersebut. Masa kanak-kanakku tak berbeda dengan orang lain.

Kota kecil tersebut memiliki penduduk yang beragam dari berbagai daerah. Aku sendiri memiliki teman bermain yang berasal dari Padang, Madura, Sunda, Toraja dan Wamena. Orang tuaku selalu berpesan padaku untuk tidak membedakan teman-temanku dari manapun mereka berasal.

Ayahku adalah seorang perantau yang berasal dari Jawa dan ibuku berasal dari Sumatera. Ayah merantau ke Wamena setelah dia baru lulus Sekolah Menengah Atas. Awalnya ayahku bekerja sebagai karyawan toko perabotan. Lalu akhirnya memutuskan untuk membuka usahanya sendiri dan kemudian menjadi seorang pedagang kelontongan di Wamena.

Ibuku adalah seorang pegawai pegawai negeri sipil yang ditugaskan di Wamena. Ibuku bekerja di Dinas Sosial. Keduanya bertemu di tempat ini kemudian memutuskan menikah dan melanjutkan hidup di tanah yang indah ini. Dahulu masa kecilku terbilang sangat menyenangkan, hingga hari itu tiba.

Tanggal 6 Oktober 2000 terpaku dalam ingatan penduduk kota Wamena sebagai peristiwa Wamena Berdarah. Peristiwa itu terjadi akibat peristiwa penurunan paksa Bendera Bintang Kejora oleh TNI dan Polri sebagai tindakan pemerintah Indonesia terhadap gerakan kemerdekaan yang disuarakan oleh penduduk asli Papua. Saat itu aku baru berusia empat tahun.

Sore itu senja baru saja menghilang di balik gunung-gunung yang mengelilingi kota. Aku berlari ke sana ke mari bermain bola biru kesayanganku. Aku terkejut melihat sebuah gumpalan asap hitam tebal di atas gunung-gunung yang tadinya indah. Bunyi tembakan mulai

I placed my teaching job assignment to Wamena on the dark brown table in my room and sipped some water, trying to calm myself. A framed, faded picture of my parents caught my eye. I could not remember the last time I had last looked closely at the photo.

I picked up the picture and sighed. "*Ibu*, Mother, *Ayah*, Father, I miss you! Will we ever meet again?"

My childhood memories swiftly returned. I was born in 1996, in Wamena, a small town in the Jayawijaya Regency of Indonesia's Papua's highlands. "Wamena" meant piglet in the vernacular language. I spent my childhood there. Although my parents were not natives of Wamena, they always taught me to love my place of birth. My childhood was no different from that of other Wamena children.

The small town had a diverse population that came from various regions. I had playmates from Padang, Madura, Sunda, Toraja, and Wamena. My parents taught me to not discriminate against my friends regardless of where they came from.

My father was a migrant from Java, and my mother came from Sumatra. My father drifted to Wamena right after graduating from high school. At first, he worked as a shopkeeper in a furniture store. Later, he decided to start his own business and opened a convenience store in Wamena.

My mother was a civil servant in the Social Services Department who had been assigned to a clerical position in Wamena.

The two met, married, and decided to continue living in beautiful Wamena. My childhood had been fairly pleasant until that dreadful day came.

The incident began when the TNI (the Indonesian military) and Polri (the Indonesian National Police) forcibly removed the Bintang Kejora (Morning Star) flag of the native Papuans, as a government measure to repress the Papuans' independence movement.

I was only four years old.

That afternoon of October 6, the sun had just disappeared behind the mountains that surrounded the town. I was running around, playing with my favorite blue ball, and became scared when suddenly a column of thick black smoke appeared over the mountains that had been so beautiful just a moment ago. The rattling of gunshots filled the far corners of town. In front of our house, some people started running.

terdegar dari sudut-sudut kota yang jauh. Beberapa orang mulai berlarian di depan rumah kami.

Seorang tetanggaku yang juga adalah penduduk asli menyuruh kami segera masuk dan berindung di bawah tempat tidur. Dengan cepat kami mengikuti perintahnya. Bunyi tembakan terus terjadi berjam-jam.

Ayah mendekapku dalam rangkulan. Dia berusaha menutup telingaku agar aku tak mendengar apapun. Namun, jeritan yang sangat menakutkan di luar sana tetap terdengar olehku dan hingga kini masih terekam dalam pikirku.

Beberapa kali rumahku diabrak-abrik oleh beberapa orang Dani yakni penduduk asli Wamena yang mencari para pendatang. Terdengar beberapa orang dari mereka berteriak "*Ou... ou... ou...*"

"Kenapa mereka?" Ibu rupanya gugup dan prihatin. "Kenapa mereka kesakitan?"

"Memang tidak kesakitan." Ayah merangkul aku lebih erat sambil berbisik, "Teriakan *ou, ou*, adalah ciri khas orang Dani untuk berperang."

Dekap Ayah menempelkan kupingku pada dadanya. Terdengar detak jantungnya yang cepat.

"Rupanya, mereka ingin kita segera meninggalkan kota Wamena." Ayah menghela nafas.

Dengan mencuri pandangan dari lengan ayah yang merangkulku, kulihat sebuah parang tajam berlumuran darah segar yang dipegang oleh salah satu orang Dani yang telah berhasil masuk ke dalam rumah kami.

Semalaman penuh Ibu terus-menerus menghitung rosario sambil berdoa agar ada orang yang menolong kami keluar dari keadaan ini. Kami masih berindung di kolong tempat tidur.

Aku merasa malam itu adalah malam yang paling mengerikan dalam hidupku. Dadaku merasa sesak untuk bernafas di kolong tempat tidur yang sempit. Tempat itu yang juga gelap dan berdebu. Beberapa kali aku merengek untuk segera keluar. Tetapi Ayah hanya memelukku agar aku mau bersabar menunggu pertolongan.

Pagi harinya doa ibuku terkabul. Beberapa anggota TNI dengan persenjataan lengkap datang ke rumah kami.

Ayah segera keluar dan meminta bantuan.

A neighbor, who was a local Dani tribe member, told us to go immediately inside and take shelter under the bed.

We quickly followed his orders. The gunfire continued for hours.

Ayah held me in his arms. He covered my ears to keep me from hearing anything. But I could still hear the frightened screams outside, and to this day, those sounds are recorded in my mind. The Danis, the indigenous Papua tribe who lived in the Wamena area, raided our house several times looking for Javanese migrants. Some of them shouted, "*Ou! Ou! Ou!*"

"What happened to them?" My mother asked nervously. "Why are they in pain?"

"They're not in pain." Ayah tightened his arms around me and whispered, "*Ou, ou*, is the Dani tribe's war cry."

My father's embrace pressed my ears against his chest, and I could hear his heart racing. "Apparently, they believe that all Javanese are the oppressors, and they want us to leave Wamena immediately." Ayah sighed heavily.

From under the bed, I peeked between my father's arms and saw one of the Dani men holding a sharp machete covered with fresh blood.

All through the night, we hid under the bed. Ibu counted rosary beads, praying that someone would rescue us.

That night was the most terrible night of my life. I felt suffocated in the narrow, dark, dusty space under the bed. From time to time, I whined, pleading to get out of the place soon. But Ayah could only give me a hug to make me wait patiently for help.

In the morning, my mother's prayers were answered. Several armed members of the TNI came to our house. Ayah immediately went outside and asked for help. They loaded our family into a military truck.

Around us, the riots continued. Massacres were rampant. Members of the Indonesian National Police and the indigenous Dani Papuans of Wamena killed each other. So much blood was shed, it seemed that peace could no longer be possible between them.

As we rode along, Ibu covered my eyes with her hands. Peeping through her fingers, I saw corpses lying along the road. Some of the bodies were mutilated.

Kami sekeluarga segera dibawa menggunakan truk milik TNI.

Sementara, kerusakan terus terjadi. Pembantaian terjadi di mana-mana. Anggota Polri dan masyarakat asli Wamena saling membunuh. Seolah-olah tak akan ada lagi damai di antara mereka.

Sepanjang jalan Ibu menghalangi pandanganku dengan tangannya.

Dari celah-celah jari-jarinya kulihat mayat-mayat bergelimpangan di sepanjang jalan. Beberapa di antaranya tak memiliki badan yang utuh lagi.

Semua orang menjerit ketakutan dan berlari-lari menyelamatkan diri. Banyak yang terpisah dari keluarganya. Bahkan banyak juga yang melihat anggota keluarganya terpenggal dan terpanah di depan mata sebelum akhirnya juga ikut terbunuh. Anak-anak kecil menjerit ketakutan. Sambil menangis mereka mencari ibunya. Suara tangisan terdengar memilukan di mana-mana

Kami diungsikan ke Polsek. Di sana, kami segera bergabung dengan pengungsi lain yang juga bernasib sama dengan kami. Saat itu, kami bersyukur masih dapat lolos dari peristiwa 6 oktober 2000 kemarin. Semuanya saling bantu-membantu mengobati luka-luka. Para wanita membantu ibu-ibu menjaga anak-anaknya yang terus menangis ketakutan. Sementara para pria membantu TNI untuk menyediakan makanan. Para pria memasak menggunakan sekop dan drum sebagai alat masak. Tak ada pilihan lain. Saat itu bertahan hidup adalah hal terpenting.

Kami diberi tempat untuk beristirahat di dalam ruang berjeruji bersama pengungsi lain.

Ibuku memelukku agar mau memejamkan mata setelah berhari-hari tak bisa tidur.

Di sudut ruang berjeruji itu aku melihat ayah mencoret-coret kertas kusam. Wajahnya, seperti sedang gelisah.

Aku segera duduk di pangkuannya sambil memeluknya dengan erat.

Ayah memasukan kertas yang dia tuliskan sebelumnya ke dalam saku jaketku. Dia mengelus-ngelus rambutku dan berkata, "Beristirahatlah, Sayang! Sebentar lagi kita harus pergi dari sini, kita sudah terlalu lama menunggu."

Untuk pertama kalinya kulihat mata Ayah berkaca-kaca. Belum sempat air matanya membasahi pipi, aku memeluknya erat.

People screamed in fear and ran to save themselves. Many became separated from their families; many witnessed family members being decapitated before getting killed themselves. Children cried, desperately looking for their mothers. The sound of crying everywhere was heartbreaking.

We were taken to the police station in Wamena and put into a room with barred windows. There, we joined other refugees who shared our fate. At that point, we were thankful we had managed to escape the October 6 incident.

The refugees all helped each other out, treating wounds, and helping mothers look after their children, who cried incessantly in fear. The men helped the Indonesian army prepare food. They used shovels and drums as cooking equipment because there was no other choice. At that moment, survival was the most important thing.

After several sleepless days and nights, my mother held me and encouraged me to close my eyes. But in the corner of the room, I saw my father scribbling on a crumpled piece of paper. He looked nervous.

I immediately went over to him, crawled onto his lap, and hugged him tightly.

Ayah put the crumpled piece of paper into my jacket pocket. He stroked my hair and said, "Get some sleep, sweetheart. We will be leaving here soon; we've already waited a long time."

That was the first time I saw tears well up in Ayah's eyes. Before the tears rolled down his cheeks, I held him tight.

The next morning, because the town was still unsafe, the military transported a large group of us to the airport. As the military escorted us by truck out of Wamena, dark smoke still covered the sky. An Indonesian Air Force plane made several quick passes over us.

I saw almost everyone try to control their fear.

Ayah whispered, "Don't be afraid, Lin; after this, we'll go far away." And, as usual, I believed him.

But when we arrived at the airport, things did not turn out as expected. Several Dani tribesmen, armed with bows and arrows, had closed the airport. Unable to land, the Indonesian Air Force plane continued to make passes above the town.

The number of Dani militia at the airport increased.

Esok paginya kami diangkut bersama rombongan besar ke bandara karena keadaan kota yang masih sangat rawan.

Para petugas TNI mengawal kami untuk keluar dari kota Wamena. Langit masih saja menampakkan kabut yang gelap. Beberapa kali pesawat jet milik angkatan udara RI melintas dengan cepat.

Saat itu kulihat kanan dan kiriku hampir semua orang menahan takut.

Ayah berbisik padaku, "Tenanglah Lin, setelah ini kita akan pergi jauh," dan seperti biasa, aku selalu percaya pada kata-kata Ayah.

Sesampainya di bandara, keadaan tak seperti yang diharapkan. Bandara telah ditutup oleh beberapa orang Dani bersenjatahan panah. Pesawat terus berputar di atas kota dan tak dapat mendarat. Kelompok orang Dani semakin banyak.

Terjadi perlawanan dari anggota TNI menyerang balik orang Dani. Beberapa anggota TNI dan orang Dani tewas di tempat karena terpanah atau tertembak senjata api. Muncratan darah membanjiri tiap sudut lapangan udara. Akhirnya TNI berhasil mengatasi serangan orang Dani.

Dengan cepat pesawat mendarat begitu keadaan aman.

Ayah segera menggendongku. Sambil ditariknya tangan Ibu, Ayah terus berlari ke arah pesawat yang jaraknya cukup jauh.

Orang-orang semakin berdesakan. Dorong-mendorong terjadi untuk saling mendahului sampai di pesawat secepatnya.

Dengan lengan dan tangannya, ayah berusaha melindungi kepalaku agar tak terbentur oleh desakan orang yang semakin ganas. Badanku bergetar ketakutan. Jemari-jemariku mencengkram Ayah.

Sambil berdesak-desak ke pintu pesawat, dia mengangkatku pada pundaknya. Terdengar Ayah terus meminta tolong pada beberapa orang yang berada di pintu pesawat agar mau menerimaku.

Begitu kami berada persis di bawah pintu pesawat, seorang pria paruh baya di sebelah kami menarik badanku dengan kencang.

Lenganku seperti hampir lepas rasanya. Aku menangis kesakitan.

Pria paruh baya tersebut memelukku dengan kuat. Kami berhasil menaiki beberapa anak tangga pesawat, sedangkan kedua orang tuaku semakin terhimpit oleh orang-orang yang berusaha saling mendahului.

Aku tidak ingin terpisah dari Ayah dan Ibu dan merontak dalam pelukannya. Pria tersebut berusaha menahan rontakkanku dan terus

The TNI and the Dani militia clashed. Members of both parties died on the spot, either pierced by arrows or shot. The airfield was splattered by blood. Eventually, the army overpowered the Danis. Quickly, the Air Force plane landed.

Ayah immediately picked me up, grabbed my mother's hand, and ran toward the plane. As we got closer to the plane, the crowd's jostling intensified. People elbowed each other, trying to board the plane as quickly as possible.

Ayah shielded my head, protecting me from being hit by the crowd pushing onto the aircraft with increasing aggressiveness.

Trembling with fear, I clung to Ayah.

He lifted me up onto his shoulder and managed to bring us very close to the plane. I heard him asking several people near the plane's door for help to take me.

A middle-aged man next to us yanked me off my father's shoulders. It felt as if I'd lost my arm, and I cried out in pain.

The man, with me in his arms, managed to climb several steps up to the aircraft.

Meanwhile, as people tried to overtake each other to board the plane, my parents were pushed farther back in the crowd.

I did not want to be separated from my parents, and I struggled in the man's arms.

He held on to me while continuing to climb the steps crowded with people muscling each other. Several people trampled him, and he began to limp.

I did not care at all what happened to him. I just kept shouting as I watched my father and mother being pushed farther and farther away by the crowd.

A few moments later, the middle-aged man got us both into the plane.

Sobbing, I called for Ayah and Ibu, but they were nowhere to be seen.

The plane's door closed and, I still did not see them. I didn't know anyone on the plane.

Terrified, I ran screaming down the plane's aisle, looking for my parents.

mencoba menaiki anak tangga yang dipenuhi oleh orang-orang yang saling mendorong. Langkahnya mulai terpincang-pincang terinjak beberapa orang.

Aku sama sekali tak memperdulikannya. Aku hanya terus beteriak melihat ayahku yang semakin terpojok oleh segerombolan orang. Beberapa saat kemudian pria paruh baya tersebut berhasil membawaku masuk ke dalam pesawat.

Aku terus menangis terisak-isak memanggil Ayah dan Ibu namun mereka tak juga terlihat di manapun. Pintu pesawat telah tertutup dan aku masih belum menemukan mereka. Aku tidak mengenal seorangpun yang berada di dalam pesawat.

Tubuhku masih bergetar ketakutan. Aku menjerit sambil berlari-lari di antara orang-orang mencari Ayah dan Ibu.

Pria paruh baya tersebut kembali menarikku ke dalam pelukannya dan berusaha membuatku berhenti menagis. Namun aku masih tidak memperdulikannya. Aku sangat ketakutan melihat orang tuaku tidak berada di sisiku. Dalam pelukan pria tersebut aku terus terisak-isak hingga mulai merasa sangat lelah. Aku tertidur dalam pelukannya selama penerbangan berlangsung dari Wamena ke Jayapura.

Sesampainya di Jayapura, pria paruh baya yang menolongku dengan gelisah terus menerus melihat ke segala arah seperti mencari orang di antara para pengungsi. Dia kemudian menitipkan aku pada para perawat di bandara.

Para perawat berusaha menghiburku sambil mengobati luka-luka di tubuhku. Mereka akhirnya menemukan kertas yang ditaruh ayah di saku jaketku. Ternyata kertas itu berisi nama dan alamat budheku yang berada di Jakarta. Merekapun akhirnya mengirimkanku kepadanya. Sejak saat itu Budhe menjadi wali yang membesarkanku.

Air mataku telah mengalir membasahi foto kedua orang tuaku. Setelah semua yang telah terjadi pada masa lampau, aku tak pernah berharap untuk kembali lagi ke Wamena. Bagiku kenangan masa kecilku adalah hal yang kubenci karena membangkitkan kesedihan dan rasa takut dalam lubuk hatiku. Namun, tugas pekerjaan yang baru kuterima menghadapkanku dengan pilihan yang sulit.

Dengan perlahan kubaca lagi daerah penugasanku: Wamena, Kabupaten Jayawijaya. Hatiku mulai merasakan perih. Kupejamkan mataku kuat-kuat. Ingin rasanya aku berteriak hingga langit pecah, "Mengapa semesta membalikkan keadaan semesta?"

The middle-aged man quickly caught me and pulled me back into his arms. He tried to make me stop crying, but I ignored him. I was so very scared knowing that my parents were not with me. I kept sobbing until I started to feel very tired. During the flight from Wamena to Jayapura, I fell asleep in the man's arms.

When we landed in Jayapura, the middle-aged man looked nervously in every direction, as if he were looking for someone among the refugees. He then entrusted me to the care of the nurses at the airport.

The nurses tried to comfort me as they treated my injuries. They found the crumpled piece of paper that my father had put in my jacket pocket. It was a note with the name and address of my aunt in Jakarta.

I was sent to her, and *Budhe*, my aunt, became my guardian and raised me.

My tears wet the photo of my parents. Because of all that had happened, I never wanted to return to Wamena. I hated my childhood memories; they always stirred up sadness and fear. My new job assignment, however, presented me with a difficult choice.

I slowly reread my job assignment post: Wamena, Jayawijaya Regency. I began to feel the pain. I closed my eyes tightly. I wanted to scream loud enough to penetrate the sky. "Why does the universe turn things around at will?"

I sunk deep into the memories of my parents and my childhood. I remembered how I was raised with a great love for the land of my birth. I also remembered how my mother taught me not to differentiate others based solely on their physical appearance.

I repeatedly pounded the table with mixed feelings of regret and anger. How could I have possibly grown up while holding a grudge? This was not the attitude my parents would have wanted to see in their daughter. Still, the loss of my beloved parents remained so painful.

But I now realized my mistake. I had misjudged a group of people based solely on my own prejudices. What I had experienced in my childhood shouldn't cause me to discriminate now. Everything that happened to my parents and me was not entirely the fault of one segment of society. My parents and I, like everyone else, were victims of the anger and differences that were reflected at that time. I tried to calm myself and return to silence.

Kurenungkan dalam-dalam wajah Ayah, Ibu dan masa kecilku. Aku dibesarkan dengan rasa cinta yang besar pada tanah kelahiranku. Ibuku juga selalu mengajarku untuk tidak membedakan orang lain hanya berdasar atas tampilan ragawinya.

Kini berkali-kali ku tepuk permukaan meja tulisku dengan penuh rasa penyesalan bercampur amarah. Bagaimana bisa selama ini aku tumbuh sambil menyimpan dendam. Aku tahu bukan ini yang diinginkan ayah ibuku. Bukan sikap ini yang mereka inginkan dari putrinya. Tapi bagaimanapun kehilangan kedua orang terkasih adalah kepedihan yang masih membekas pada hatiku.

Satu kesalahanku yang aku sadari saat ini adalah seharusnya aku tidak boleh menilai buruk sebuah kelompok masyarakat hanya berdasarkan sudut pandangku saja. Apa yang kualami pada masa kecilku seharusnya tidak membuatku membangun benteng perbedaan. Segala hal yang terjadi pada kedua orang tuaku tidak sepenuhnya kesalahan sebuah kelompok masyarakat. Aku, orang tuaku, dan semua orang lain adalah korban dari murka dan perbedaan yang mencerminkan saat itu. Aku coba menenangkan diriku kembali dalam diam.

Sekarang aku mengerti apa yang diharapkan kedua orang tuaku. Kuambil sebuah kertas dan aku luapkan segala isi hati terdalamku dengan coretan yang dengan cepat memenuhi kertas tersebut.

Peristiwa tanggal 6 Oktober sebetulnya tidak perlu terjadi jika musyawarah damai digunakan sebagai jembatan yang tepat untuk menyelesaikan masalah. Malah kedua pihak, yaitu aparat gabungan TNI, Polri dan Masyarakat Papua di Wamena saling mempertahankan pendapat masing-masing.

Pemerintah bersikeras, meminta masyarakat menurunkan bendera Bintang Kejora yang berkibar di beberapa titik di Kota Wamena.

-Sementara masyarakat menolak dan melawan.

Hal inilah yang mengakibatkan sedikitnya 30 orang tewas dan 40 lainnya luka berat. Luka dari peristiwa ini membuat aku mengerti persoalan itu bukan soal perbedaan, bukan soal pandangan. Bukan persoalan kebudayaan tapi ini adalah sebuah kepercayaan. Kepercayaan antara dua pihak yang sama-sama merasa sebagai korban. Korban kekerasan, korban ketidakadilan terkait perbedaan terhadap kelompok masyarakat. Keduanya merasa terancam dengan kehadiran satu sama lain.

Kita bukan dibentengi sebuah perbedaan karena pada hakikatnya kita tak pernah berbeda. Tetapi sebuah pembatas terbesar di antara kita

I now understood what my parents had hoped for. I took a piece of paper and poured my innermost feelings into the writing that quickly filled the paper. I wrote:

The incident on October 6, 2000, would not have happened had peaceful deliberations been used to resolve the problem. Instead, both parties — the joint network of the TNI military and Polri police force on one side, and the Papuan community in Wamena on the other — stood unwavering in their respective opinions.

The Indonesian government insisted that the Morning Star flag, flying at several points in Wamena, be taken down, while the Papuan population refused to obey and opposed the order.

This incident resulted in at least thirty people being killed and forty others seriously injured. The wound from this event makes me understand that the actual problem was not caused by differences. It was not about different perspectives. It was not about cultural differences. It was about trust. There was no trust between the two parties, who both saw themselves as victims: victims of violence and victims of injustice related to differences between communities. Both entities felt threatened by the presence of the other.

We are not fortified by differences because, in essence, we are never different. The biggest barrier between us is our suspicion of each other. This is the element that prevents us from living peacefully side by side.

During the incident, not one single corpse I saw had a different color of blood than another. Only when covered by different skin colors did indigenous Papuans and Javanese migrants start to distrust each other, and this widened the gap between them. The military apparatus, government officials, and civilians — including the indigenous Papuan people who live in the region — should understand this historical wound. By understanding history and the character of the Papuan people, we can coexist peacefully in the land of Papua.

After writing the short note, I felt greatly relieved. I focused on my job assignment to teach in Wamena, and I remembered Budhe once said to me, "Teaching is a noble profession."

In my opinion, noble work should be done sincerely. Determined and ready to make peace with my bitter childhood memories, I was convinced I had made the best decision. I would soon ask Budhe's blessing for my teaching career in Wamena.

Hopefully, Budhe would not only accept, but also understand the decision I had made. I slowly picked up my employment agreement. For a moment, I re-read it. My grip around the pen tightened, then I signed

adalah kecurigaan pada satu sama lain. Inilah yang menjadi penghalang agar kita dapat hidup berdampingan dalam damai.

Saat peristiwa itu terjadi tak ada satu mayatpun yang kulihat mengeluarkan warna darah yang berbeda dari satu sama lain. Hanya saja saat tertutup oleh warna kulit berbeda ketidakpercayaan antara masyarakat asli Papua dan pendatang muncul dan membuat satu sama lain semakin menjauh. Seharusnya aparat militer, petugas pemerintah dan masyarakat sipil yang tinggal di wilayah Papua maupun penduduk asli, mampu memahami luka sejarah ini. Dengan memahami luka sejarah dan tabiat orang Papua, kita dapat hidup berdampingan dengan damai di tanah Papua.

Usai menulis catatan singkat tersebut, hatiku terasa ringan. Pikiranku memusat pada surat penempatanku menjadi guru di Wamena. Aku teringat perkataan Budhe yang pernah berkata padaku, "Menjadi guru adalah pekerjaan yang mulia!"

Menurutku pekerjaan yang mulia seharusnya dilakukan secara tulus. Dan kini aku bertekad untuk siap berdamai dengan kenangan pahitku di masa kecil. Aku semakin mantap pada keputusanku. Aku akan segera meminta doa restu Budhe agar mengijinkanku menjadi seorang guru di Wamena. Semoga Budhe juga mau mengerti dan menerima keputusan yang telah kubuat. Kuambil surat perjanjian kerjaku dengan perlahan. Sejenak aku membacanya kembali. Jemari-jemariku mulai menggenggam pena menandatangani. *Aku siap.* Kuhelakkan nafas panjang sambil berkata, "Aku akan pulang ke Wamena!"

the document. *I am ready.* Taking a deep breath, I said, "Wamena, I'm coming home."

Alloy Bintang Kampung

Radixa Meta Utami was born in Denpasar, Bali on February 25, 1995. Her parents moved to Semarang, Central Java, when she was in elementary school.

Meta completed her high school in SMAN 1 Mungkid. In 2015, she enrolled at the Mathematics Department of the Faculty of Science and Technology at the University of Sanata Dharma. However, in 2016 she changed her major and currently studies Indonesian Literature at the Faculty of Letters at the University of Sanata Dharma.

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Village Celebrity

Novita Dewi started writing poetry and short stories during her elementary and middle school days. She published in *Si Kuncung* and *Bobo*, children magazines, as well as wrote for the children's columns featured in *Kompas* and *Sinar Harapan* (now *Suara Pembaruan*). She now nurtures her interest in literature by writing articles about literature and translation for scientific journals. Novita is widely published. The short stories translated and published by Dalang Publishing are her first attempts of literary translation.

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